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The Remnants of Future in the Past

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the structure of time and the possibility of the future within it, challenging conventional linear representations of temporality. The central thesis argues that the future does not lie on a vertical line above or to the eternally far right of a horizontal timeline; rather, the it emerges logically, not merely sequentially, following the past and present. For the future to fully manifest, the past and present must be thoroughly processed and, in some sense, exhausted. However, catastrophes, which have occurred and will presumably continue to occur, disrupt the flow of time by halting the past and indicating future occurrences in unpredictable ways. Therefore, to truly engage with the future, it is sometimes necessary to revisit the past, much like in psychoanalysis, where exploring repressed experiences helps illuminate present and future trajectories. This brings us to a crucial idea of this article: history and historiography are not solely concerned with understanding past events but also with anticipating and shaping future possibilities. In this light, many future catastrophes have their roots in the past. Recognizing this dynamic allows us to see that many future catastrophes have their origins in unresolved past events, reinforcing the necessity of engaging with history not only as retrospective analysis but as a mode of future-oriented thinking.

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Introduction: The Illusion of Pure Future

When St. Augustine reflected on the elusive nature of time, he noted that there is no genuine past or future; wherever they are, they do not exist as future or past entities, but as present ones (Saint Augustine, 2008, 348). This profound insight has significantly shaped the historical understanding of time. However, within this context, a crucial distinction exists between the past and the future: referencing the past involves actual events, facts or realities, whereas the future pertains to events that are merely conceived or imagined. The past can be identified through monuments or texts, providing it with a concrete location. Conversely, the future, especially when disconnected from the past or present, is purely imagined, lacking a definite place and thereby appearing less objective.

The future resembles the past primarily in the realm of the mind, existing as a subjective reality; while the past manifests as memory, the future emerges as expectation (Saint Augustine, 2008, 350). The significance of the past is also evident in inherited monuments, known as *lieux de mémoire* (Nora, 1989). However, *logically* and *methodologically*, introducing the concept of the future is unavoidable. This is because the language used to think of reality is inherently sequential; language imposes temporality and, consequently, the notion of the future. This inherent temporality of language renders it virtually impossible to conceive of eternity, leaving the human mind perpetually confronted with an ever-receding future. As a result, the concept of the future can become an impediment to experiencing the present moment. One might observe that people typically plan to live in the future rather than engaging with the here and now. This way of life gradually gained legitimacy through the introduction of the Enlightenment concept of progress, a powerful idea that seemed to supersede all other concepts characterizing public life. The notion of progress became a dominant force, influencing societal values, shaping policies, and redefining what was considered important in the public sphere. It promoted the belief that continual improvement and forward momentum were the ultimate goals, often overshadowing other cultural, ethical, and philosophical considerations. Since the concept of progress cannot be empirically verified, it has faced as many arguments in favor as against it. Critics have often condemned it as anti-Christian and anti-humanist, contending that the sufferings endured by generations are not justified by progress but are instead regarded solely as a means to an end.

The theory of progress is unconcerned with resolving human destiny and history in an eternal, timeless sphere beyond the bounds of history. Instead, it concentrates on solutions within the temporal torrent of history, aspiring to a resolution at a specific future moment that frequently acts as the executioner and devourer of the past (Berdyaev, 1949, 190). The doctrine of progress cannot endure criticism within Christianity, where the concept of the future itself is problematic.

In divine consciousness, the past and the future are indistinguishable. Accordingly, the Last Judgment is not merely an anticipated future event but a continual process occurring at every instant. This implies that perceiving the future as a distinct and autonomous entity can

significantly impede the comprehension of various realities, especially those deeply rooted in past events. The interpretation and understanding of these past events are integral in shaping the future. Thus, the future should not be viewed as a predetermined temporal segment, but rather as a dynamic process driven by the soul's journey toward greater awareness. Consequently, it becomes imperative to critically examine the myths surrounding temporal periods, develop strategies to transcend them, and uncover the new horizons and perspectives that such an understanding will reveal. This approach will facilitate a deeper, more nuanced comprehension of historical reality.

1. The Myth of the River of Time and Its Criticism

In poetry, numerous myths, and everyday concepts, time is often conceived as a river or a continuous process that flows either from the past to the future, or conversely, from the future into the past. This metaphorical depiction underscores humanity's attempt to grasp the elusive nature of time. The flow from past to future suggests a linear progression where experiences accumulate and build upon one another. Conversely, envisioning time as flowing from the future into the past highlights the anticipatory nature of human thought, where future aspirations and expectations shape present actions and past recollections. These dual perspectives reveal the complexity of temporal perception, illustrating how deeply intertwined our understanding of time is with both our cultural narratives and personal experiences (Allen, 2003). However, in both cases, persistent questioning reveals one central issue: Does this river have a preexisting channel, or does it form its own course as it flows? This question extends to the river's origin and termination. If there exists a predetermined channel, one must inquire about its nature and the medium through which time flows, likely resulting in unsatisfactory answers. Conversely, if there is no predefined channel and time forges its own path, then a linear flow is implausible, as the flow could ultimately circle back upon itself. In other words, "A line can be used to picture time – yet a time that has already passed by, that is already immobile and fixed" (Michalski, 1997, 126).

Bergson presents a comparable idea, asserting that true duration is inherently immeasurable; what can be quantified are merely the portions that the intellect is capable of apprehending (Bergson 2001, 107). Overall, following the work of Kant, Mach, and natural scientists at the beginning of the 20th century, it became apparent that common perceptions of time as an independent entity do not endure under rigorous examination. Broadly speaking, reflections on time serve as a bridge between analytic philosophy, which tends toward scientific inquiry, and continental philosophy, which remains skeptical of academic science. While natural scientists have uncovered the complex and extraordinary nature of time, continental philosophers have drawn upon these scientific insights to develop conceptual frameworks for understanding temporality.

In one of his articles, Heidegger explores the concept of time within the natural sciences and emphasizes its unique characteristics in historiography. He asserts that the investigation into the function of time becomes more reliable when it is not studied in isolation, but rather

through the methodology proposed by historiography. This approach provides a more nuanced and contextually rich understanding of time's role and significance (Heidegger, 1978, 8). It is no coincidence that Merleau-Ponty observed that *Time and Being* emerges from Husserl's suggestions and is essentially an elaboration of the concepts of the 'natural concept of the world' (natürlichen Weltbegriff) and the 'life-world' (Lebenswelt) (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, lxxi).

Although the ideological relationship between Husserl and Heidegger eventually broke down, Heidegger's early questions are typically phenomenological, such as how one can think of being and how time appears in consciousness. In one lecture, Heidegger summarizes his reflections on time, showing that describing the concept of time within the context of time itself results in a sequence of ideas and their interpretations. This approach does not lead to a true understanding of time because it combines different opinions that might not have much in common. Instead, a historical approach will be effective if it is derived from phenomenological research on time and history, as this reveals the mode of being of time (Heidegger, 1985, 6). However, being becomes comprehensible through its duration in time. Thus, to grasp the mode of being of time, one have to refer back to time itself. However, time itself does not manifest within the confines of time; for this to occur, time must possess objective content, indicating that time is always the time of a particular substance. This suggests that time can be interpreted as the sense or meaning of being (Gorner, 2007, 153).

Being without time cannot be conceived as an object of thought. Since these two entities are unthinkable without each other, the challenge lies in identifying the points of intersection that will facilitate their understanding. Naturally, this realm is consciousness, where time and being are unified.

According to Lyotard, time does not flow within consciousness; instead, consciousness unfolds and creates time, or rather, its own time, as a way of discovering and defining itself (Lyotard, 1991, 112). Lyotard's argument is particularly compelling as it challenges conventional views of time as an independent, external flow, instead positioning it as an intrinsic aspect of consciousness. His perspective aligns with phenomenological and poststructuralist critiques of objectivist temporality, emphasizing that time is not a pre-existing framework but a construct shaped by cognitive and existential processes. By framing temporality as an unfolding of consciousness itself, Lyotard highlights its fluid, non-linear, and contingent nature – an idea that has significant implications for contemporary debates on the subjectivity of experience and historical interpretation.

Heidegger takes another step back and redirects his focus from consciousness – an intricate mental construct shaped by cognitive processes – to Da-sein. This transition is necessary because, unlike consciousness, Da-sein is not merely a passive container of thoughts but an existential structure fundamentally defined by its relation to being and time. Throughout the unfolding of Da-sein, this very unfolding becomes an object of care – a motivation for orientation within the spatio-temporal world. Alternatively, Da-sein exists precisely as care, embodying a reality perpetually in flux. Care is not merely a logical

descriptor of existence but rather an embodiment of Da-sein's process of being-in-the-world, a path towards death that remains perpetual and unending. Paragraph 65 of *Being and Time* is titled "Temporality as the Ontological Meaning of Care," signaling the profound significance of flux and temporality in Heidegger's exploration of care.

As Heidegger asserts, "Temporality "is" not a *being* at all. It is not, but rather *temporalizes* itself" (Heidegger, 1996, 302). It temporalizes itself from its own future, thereby making its present existence possible. This idea, found in Deleuze in a slightly modified form, states that "the present and past are in turn no more than dimensions of the future: the past as condition, the present as agent" (Deleuze, 1994, 93). This implies that time is not merely composed of the three forms – past, present, and future. Rather, the concept of temporality is segmented into various dimensions or levels that are, from a phenomenological perspective, considered primary. Consciousness tends to derive the essence of time from the being of its forms, primarily considering the past as an object of memory. However, as Sartre notes in his acceptance of Heidegger's philosophy, it is impossible to justify the being of a past that is separate from the present, because the past is fundamentally "my" past. It is intrinsically mine, derived from my current existence (Sartre, 1957, 110).

If the past is not a part of my present, if my existence in the past is not manifested in my present existence, then it is impossible to talk about the past at all, as there would be no speaking subject. It is the personal past that claims to be the universal past, not the other way around. On the other hand, the past is independent and not under my control; it is not something I own: "One cannot "have" a past as one "has" an automobile or a racing stable" (Sartre, 1957, 112). The past is so intricately related to the present that the present itself can be seen as the past. Thus, separate observation and research of the two are bound to fail. The past is always the past of the present, with its foundations left behind. Otherwise, the present will remain elusive. This inextricable link between the past and the present serves as evidence of their unity in human consciousness, since the past cannot be possessed: "In this sense I am my past. I do not have it; I am it" (Sartre, 1957, 114).

Although it is possible to change or try to renounce past events, such actions are, first and foremost, retrospective. Reacting to the past means that it is a part of my existence; otherwise, it would not be possible to even contemplate it. There is an element of the past within my existence that remains independent and cannot be eradicated. To change that, I must fully accept it. Hence, Sartre's paradoxical remark: "Thus it is in so far as I am my past that I can not-be it; it is even this very necessity of being my past which is the only possible foundation of the fact that I am not it" (Sartre, 1957, 117).

The future, as an object of expectation, stands in contrast to the past in this regard: it signifies what I can become. Both the past and the future fundamentally derive from human qualities, and the present is defined by the concepts of 'before' and 'after' as the interval between them.

2. Meaning, Time, and History

Augustine's conception of the present, while influential, does not fully address the emergence of historicity as a fundamental concept. The phenomenological-existential approach, as exemplified by Heidegger, aims to substantiate how the idea of historicity arises and how the notions of the present, past, and future derive from it. Heidegger initiates this inquiry with Da-sein, marking the first stage of a phenomenological description of temporal existence. Only humans, through their Da-sein, concern themselves with their own end and future time. Therefore, only humans are historical beings. Consequently, the relationship between being and time can be understood exclusively through humans, as they are the ones who create history within the temporal framework (Gillespie 1989, 37). In other words, the principles of temporality and historicity stem from the nature of humans, from the essence of Da-sein within them, and not vice versa. Da-sein's existence ensures historicity, rather than historicity ensuring Da-sein's existence. To quote Heidegger:

> The analysis of the historicity of Da-sein attempted to show that this being is not "temporal" because it "is in history", but because, on the contrary, it exists and can exist historically only because it is temporal in the ground of its being (Heidegger, 1996, 345).

Because Da-sein exists in a temporal mode – that is, it projects itself toward possibilities, remembers its past, and interprets its present – Its being is always disclosed in an interpretive horizon. This projection is not aimless; it is guided by how Da-sein makes sense of its situation. Temporality does not merely unfold as a sequence of events but as a structure in which understanding arises. In this way, Da-sein does not simply exist in time but relates to time as a condition of possibility for interpretation.

Understanding, then, is always already temporal; it takes place within the unfolding of time and depends on Da-sein's anticipatory awareness of its own end. This structure makes clear that existence itself is not mute or neutral; rather, it is always encountered through the lens of significance. To exist temporally is also to interpret, to ascribe relevance, to seek coherence – and this is the ground upon which meaning arises. It is the *meaning* that serves as the link connecting different times, and temporality itself constitutes the meaning of being. Meaning signifies that upon which the intelligibility of something rests, implying that human understanding posits a certain meaning around which being converges.

Meaning is not an external reality but emerges directly from Da-sein's self-understanding efforts. In general, meaning is perhaps the only concept that devoid of an opposite, for even the notion of meaninglessness is imbued with meaning. Meaning is the mode through which an object is presented to consciousness. History exists predominantly as meaning, and the transformation of that meaning signifies a new understanding of history. Real history is the history of meaning (Michalski, 1997, 147). From this perspective, the meaning of history lies in the continuous historicization of history, which guarantees the perpetual existence of humanity. Self-historicization is the possibility of shaping one's own destiny.

It is evident that such an understanding of meaning not only nullifies the divisions of time into past, present, and future but also disrupts the clear periodization of history as a whole. Approaches that support the periodization of history are based on the premise that there exists an ontological layer of reality which underpins the division of historical periods. The task is to identify these crucial moments and clearly define them. However, this premise is not self-evident and needs justification. Unlike economics, political science, sociology, linguistics, and other disciplines that can be defined by their specific objects of study, history's object is indeterminate; it has no object other than itself (Koselleck, 2002, 4).

In this sense, research becomes historical thanks to the theory of history, which puts forward the concept and specific framework of periodization (Koselleck, 2002, 7). This implies that historical time is fundamentally distinct from natural time and is subject to creation and establishment. Thus, depending on the situation, there can be various historical times and periods, each of which can be equally valid from an ontological-epistemological standpoint. In other words, temporality, or more precisely, 'temporalities', is a concept that is simultaneously historical and metahistorical, emerging both as a result of historical inquiry and as a foundational theoretical premise (Jordheim, 2012, 160).

The periods that are observed and distinguished in historical analysis are not simply realities arising from a purely historical perspective but are instead born of theoretical influence. Therefore, the periodization of history is not an intrinsic necessity and can constrain the comprehension of history, especially when periods are arbitrarily divided into dichotomies such as good and bad, or light and darkness. In this context, various forms of resistance to periodization are entirely understandable, as they seek to reveal the obscured episodes of history. Periodization serves as a means to comprehend and navigate historical events. Nonetheless, it bears the risk of distorting historical reality, given that the ontological foundation of history does not reach consciousness directly but is mediated through epistemological frameworks. Consequently, the historical subject is inherently dependent on the mode of being of history. Thus, the intricate relationship between meaning, time, and history challenges traditional notions of temporal divisions and periodization. It becomes evident that the future is inherently linked to the past through the continuous reconfiguration of meaning.

The future, as an object of expectation, shapes our understanding of the past, just as the past informs our expectations of the future. This reciprocal relationship highlights the remnants of future possibilities embedded within historical contexts. By recognizing this dynamic interplay, we gain a deeper understanding of the evolving nature of history, particularly in relation to catastrophic events, where the past, present, and future are inextricably intertwined. The potential for future transformation is always present within the remnants of our historical comprehension, underscoring the continuous and reciprocal shaping of time and meaning. This ongoing process reveals the fluid and interconnected nature of temporal experience, where the boundaries between past, present, and future is constantly reconfigured. Meaning, far from being a static representation of events, becomes the very medium through which temporality is lived and history is constituted. In this view,

history is not a chronicle of fixed facts but a horizon of intelligibility that emerges through Da-sein's temporal being – its capacity to remember, anticipate, and interpret. Catastrophic events in particular, by destabilizing conventional narratives, lay bare the fissures and potentialities within historical meaning, opening space for reinterpretation and renewal. It is within this space that the human being, as a historical subject, is both burdened and empowered: burdened by the weight of memory and responsibility, and empowered by the capacity to reimagine the future.

3. **The Possibility of Future after Catastrophe**

The perception of history as a linear process becomes even more challenging in the face of catastrophes. This phenomenon shares certain similarities with natural disasters but also differs in key ways. Etymologically, the Greek term for "catastrophe" denotes a "sudden turn." In this sense, catastrophe entails an event that interrupts the usual course of nature, exceeding nature's *normal* functioning and resulting in harm to human society. For instance, if a tsunami were to strike an uninhabited, remote island, it would not typically be classified as a disaster, as its impact would be devoid of human suffering or societal disruption. What is considered "normal" extends beyond mere reality or, in this case, nature; it is equally dependent on human knowledge.

An earthquake, for instance, is regarded as "normal" insofar as we understand its underlying mechanisms, predict its occurrence, and recognize its consequences – particularly when it does not result in human casualties. More broadly, as long as a phenomenon lacks a name, it appears overwhelmingly terrifying. The very act of naming, however, imposes conceptual boundaries, thereby constraining and mitigating the scope of the disaster. Following the same reasoning, we can extend this perspective to historical catastrophes. If we adopt the logic of natural disasters, a historical catastrophe can be understood as a disruption of the *normal* progression of history caused by large-scale human losses. Beyond the mere existence of historical events and factual reality, the discourse surrounding history – the language through which historical life is articulated – becomes a fundamental factor in shaping its meaning and interpretation. The question of whether time actually passes, and how fast it passes, has been the subject of considerable philosophical debate (Markosian, 1993); likewise, the notion of historical time and its progression is no less contested. Nevertheless, it can at least be asserted that language itself imposes the very experience of time's passage (Markosian, 1992). In this regard, the disruption of history's course is, first and foremost, a disruption of historical language and discourse. Faced with an overwhelming and unspeakable reality, historiographic language fractures and collapses into silence, as its conventional words and conceptual framework prove utterly inadequate in articulating the magnitude of what has happened.

In other words, a profound and traumatic experience from the past demand's articulation; otherwise, if left unspoken, it risks slipping beyond human possession, with consequences that become unpredictable. This need becomes even more urgent when the event transcends ordinary occurrences and reflects an intention that reaches into the metaphysical. The most

striking symbol of this is the massacre of an entire unarmed people, where no witnesses remain, as they too have been annihilated. Those who are connected to the lost community assume the responsibility of recounting what happened, yet their language falters – it can recount events but struggles to penetrate to the most fundamental truth: the intention behind them. Here, history ceases to be merely descriptive and becomes instead a search for proof of one's own death. At this point, for a society confronting annihilation, the notion of future seems nonexistent, for its continued existence is rendered uncertain. The only means of preserving itself lies in the act of articulating an unfathomable catastrophe, thereby maintaining a connection with the past. Yet, unlike the process of naming in the context of natural disasters – where language helps to contain and comprehend the event – this act of naming becomes deeply problematic.

Notably, during the systematic massacres of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire from the 1890s to 1915, some Armenian intellectuals initially referred to these events as "Aghet," meaning catastrophe in Armenian. In time, this term was eclipsed by the word "genocide," a designation that redefined the nature of the tragedy within historical and legal discourse.

In any case, if we consider the difficulties in naming a historical catastrophe, they can be divided into two main categories.

First, might the impact of the catastrophe be conveyed more effectively in an alternative context or framework? Put simply, does the politicization of catastrophe contribute to psychological distress?

Second, does human intentionality hinder the process of naming and conceptualization? Conversely, does the act of naming obscure the catastrophe's fundamental nature? More specifically, are profound psychological issues deliberately neglected within political discourse?

These two phenomena are clearly different but ultimately related – they share similarities, as well as distinctions. A prime example of the first case, using classical psychoanalytic terminology, is when an individual experiences a loss, or grief, and must be able to acknowledge and articulate the experience. If this process is not carried out, the experience is repressed, with the potential for it to emerge unpredictably, causing psychological distress. This issue takes on greater significance and intensity when considered at the societal level.

The second type of problems arises from the fact that catastrophe is often unspeakable due to its complexity and multiple layers. Because catastrophe cannot be fully expressed, there is a tendency to politicize it and effectively bring it to an end. As mentioned earlier, the emergence of the term 'genocide' reflects this politicization of historical catastrophes. *Genocide is perhaps the greatest historical catastrophe.* For a long time, it was believed that an event could only be considered catastrophic if it had not a suitable name. And in response to Winston Churchill's characterization that "we are in the presence of a crime without a name", Raphael Lemkin gave the name 'genocide', and it seemed that the issue was resolved by this. However, that only at first glance it might seem: no matter how Lemkin explained the origin of the name; in fact, the problem started after that name in certain way.

Genocide' is, in the first place, a word… The history of words is not, of course, the same as the history of ideas. It may be that 'genocide' represents different ideas embedded in different theories… Words can be powerful, and powerful words can be confusing… We have to seek control over our language if we are to grasp the terrible realities to which they somehow refer (Freeman, 1991, 3).

The key point is that language transforms realities into the present. The past and future, when articulated through language, take on a present form as textual representations. Meanwhile, they remain merely as experiences within their own envirenment. More specifically, "catastrophe" is a name for an event that returns to us from the future. The future anterior tense is apt here: it will have come back to us when we achieve a genuine understanding of the reality of what occurred (Nichanian, 2009, 10). It becomes apparent that a catastrophic event in the past anticipates our future confrontation with its repercussions. This notion implies that the future trajectory is already inscribed within the past, suggesting a cyclical interplay where past events continue to shape and influence our unfolding future.

The remnants of the future are revealed in the past through the enduring traces of humanity that persist even after a catastrophe. Giorgio Agamben's concept of "remnants" carries a theological and messianic implication (Agamben, 1999, 162), suggesting that within these remnants lies the potential for a future redemption or transformation.[1] These remnants signify not only what has survived the catastrophe but also what might yet emerge from the ruins, pointing towards a future that is intertwined with the past in unexpected and profound ways.

In the concept of the remnant, there is a convergence of the aporia of testimony and the aporia of messianism. Similar to how the remnant of Israel does not signify the entirety of the people nor a specific subset, but rather the non-coincidence of the whole and the part, messianic time also exists as a disjunction that separates historical time from eternity. Likewise, the remnants of Auschwitz – the witnesses – do not represent solely the deceased or the survivors, neither the drowned nor the saved. They embody what remains in between these categories, reflecting a complex and profound intersection of human experience amidst tragedy and survival (Agamben, 1999, 163-164). This concept of the remnant, rooted in messianic and prophetic traditions, finds its apex in Paul's teachings. It represents more than a future-oriented idea as seen in the prophets; for Paul, it embodies a profound present reality that defines the essence of the messianic 'now' (Agamben, 2005, 55). His exploration of the remnant signifies a pivotal shift from mere anticipation to a lived experience, marking a transformative understanding within his theological framework.

In anthropological terms, what is expressed at the individual level parallels psychoanalysis, a subject that various authors have examined (Caruth 1996; LaCapra 2001).

[1] It is worth emphasizing that decades before Agamben, in 1931, the Armenian writer Hakob Oshagan embarked on writing his novel *Remnants*. However, the work remained unfinished, possibly due to the unattainable nature of its goal.

Releasing the past from the burden of the future involves an exploration found in psychoanalytic practices because, similarly, what remained repressed is often that which had been proven difficult to articulate. This difficulty suggests that repression is not merely a mechanism of forgetting but is deeply tied to the structures of temporality and expectation. In this regard, Lacan's perspective is particularly illuminating, as he argues that repression paradoxically originates not from the past but from the future (Lacan, 1991, 158). This reversal of causality – where trauma is not merely relegated to the past but shaped by an anticipated, though often unconscious, future – challenges us to reconsider historical consciousness.

If repression functions through a deferral, a temporal disjunction, then it is not merely an act of omission but a mode of inscription, one that governs the possibilities of remembrance and forgetting alike. Thus, what remains 'forgotten' is not truly absent; rather, it endures in latency, sublty shaping both individual and collective subjectivities in ways that become apparent only when historical moments or psychic ruptures force their return. The implications of this for anthropological and historiographical inquiry are profound. It suggests that history, far from being a neutral reconstruction of events, is always conditioned by the expectations of the present and the projections of the future.

Catastrophe, for instance, is not only retrospectively mourned but is frequently prefigured through anxieties, premonitions, and the unspoken dread of what remains unarticulated. Thus, the task of addressing the repressed – whether in individual therapy or historical narration – is not merely about retrieving what has been lost but reconfiguring the conditions under which the past is made thinkable. The challenge, therefore, is not simply to release the past from the burden of the future but to recognize that this burden is an active force – one that shapes not only how histories are told but also how they remain entangled in the expectations of what is yet to come.

To explain this engaging phenomenon, Slavoj Žižek notably refers to William Tenn's well-known story "The Discovery of Morniel Mathaway" which can illustrate this point effectively. A respected art historian travels from the 25th century to our time in a time machine to meet Morniel Mathaway, a painter unrecognized in their era but later hailed as a genius. Instead of finding a brilliant artist, the historian encounters an imposter claiming Mathaway's identity. The imposter steals the time machine, leaving the historian stranded in our time. With no other option, the historian decides to assume Mathaway's identity and paint all the masterpieces remembered from the future under Mathaway's name. In the end, it turns out the historian was the real unrecognized genius all along (Žižek, 2008, 60).

The case of Morniel Mathaway illustrates how the future can shape our perception of the past, demonstrating that what we consider historical truth is not fixed but emerges through an ongoing dialogue between memory, recognition, and anticipation. This story exemplifies how the past and future are intertwined in unexpected ways. Just as the historian's supposed "past" achievements were actually determined by future recognition, historical inquiry is not merely about reconstructing what has happened but also about shaping what is yet to come. In this sense, researching the past is not a passive act of retrieval but an active

engagement with the future, much like in psychoanalysis, where confronting repressed experiences reveals new possibilities for understanding and transformation. In this sense, investigating the past is not a passive act of retrieval but an active engagement with the future, much like in psychoanalysis, where confronting repressed experiences reveals new possibilities for understanding and transformation. Just as the psychoanalytic subject does not merely recall a static past but actively restructures it through the very process of interpretation, historical thought reshapes its own object of study, producing new configurations of meaning that, in turn, reframe both the past and the future. It is within this dynamic interplay – whereby the past is not simply remembered but constituted through the horizon of expectation – that the true stakes of historiography, psychoanalysis, and cultural memory reveal themselves.

Conclusion

The intricate interplay between past, present, and future challenges conventional perceptions of temporality and historiography. This exploration reveals that the perception of history is not merely a linear progression of events but a dynamic and cyclical process where the past continually influences and shapes the future. And the future is never simply ahead of us; it is already inscribed in the past, in its silences, its traumas, and its unfulfilled possibilities.

The remnants of catastrophic events, as illustrated through the concept of the remnant, demonstrate that our understanding of history must account for the profound and often inexpressible impacts of these events. Releasing the past from the burden of the future, akin to psychoanalytic work, involves confronting what has been repressed and difficult to articulate. These perspectives underscore the necessity of rethinking the linearity of time and the ways in which future expectations can retroactively shape our understanding of the past.

Ultimately, this study emphasizes that history and historiography are not only concerned with the past but are also deeply connected to the future, shaping and being shaped by the horizons of possibility that lie ahead. By understanding the remnants of the future within the past, we gain a richer, more nuanced comprehension of historical reality. This approach encourages us to anticipate and shape future possibilities while remaining critically engaged with the legacies of past events. Through this lens, the study of history becomes a transformative endeavor, bridging temporal divides and fostering a deeper awareness of the ongoing dialogue between past, present, and future.

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